

New and noteworthy bird records from the northern sector of the Western Andes of Colombia

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The Western Andes (Cordillera Occidental) is the lowest and geologically youngest of the three Andean ranges of Colombia. The rain and cloud forests of the extremely wet Pacific slope are relatively intact in most areas but the drier, rain-shadow vegetation of the eastern (Cauca Valley) slope has been subject to much greater human disturbance. Ornithological studies in the Western Andes, subsequent to initial collecting expeditions (see Chapman 1917), concentrated largely on the southern sector of this cordillera, in the departments of Nariño, Cauca and Valle (e.g., Hilty 1997, Miller 1963, Negret 1994, Orejuela 1987, Orejuela *et al.* 1979, Salaman 1994). In contrast, the northern sector, roughly that portion included within the departments of Risaralda, Chocó and Antioquia, received little study during most of the latter half of the twentieth century. The only reasonably detailed study published during this period is that of Echeverri (1986) for Parque Nacional Natural "Las Orquídeas". During the last decade, however, the pace of ornithological work in the region has increased. Between 1991 and 1993, the Instituto de Ciencias Naturales of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia (ICN) conducted biological inventories in several municipalities of the department of Risaralda for the Corporación Autónoma de Recursos Naturales y Desarrollo de Risaralda (CARDER). The ornithological surveys were carried out by FGS with help from Sandra Arango and Inés Elvira Lozano. Two species of birds new to science were encountered (Salaman & Stiles 1996, Robbins & Stiles 1999) and several important records were obtained (Stiles 1998, Stiles & Alvarez-López 1995), as well as the range extensions reported here. Between 1999 and 2002, ornithological surveys of several localities in the most unexplored areas in the Andes of the department of Antioquia were conducted by AMC with the help of CDC, JLT, GAL and others (see acknowledgements), for the Corporación Autónoma Regional del Centro de Antioquia (CORANTIOQUIA). In addition to new information on the distribution and conservation status of several threatened species (Cuervo & Toro 2001, Toro & Flórez 2001), these surveys produced new data on the distribution of several species of the W Andes. In this paper, we have compiled all the records obtained during the above-mentioned surveys that represent substantial extensions of distribution ranges reported in recent general works (Echeverri 1986, Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990, Hilty & Brown 1986, Isler & Isler 1999, Negret 1994, Ridgely & Tudor 1989, 1994, Stotz *et al.* 1996) or suggested by museum specimens housed at the ICN and other major Colombian ornithological collections. We consider substantial range extensions those records that represent (1) the first

known occurrences of the species in the W Andes, (2) the first records for the Pacific (west) or Cauca Valley (east) slope if previously recorded in the cordillera, or (3) extensions of over *c.* 100 km distance and/or *c.* 200 m elevation along one of the slopes. We analyze each slope separately because although the W Andes are relatively low in many areas, high elevations dominated by paramo vegetation at the ridgeline make the habitat discontinuous between slopes, even for high-Andean forest species. The Pacific and Cauca Valley slopes represent distinct Endemic Bird Areas (Stattersfield *et al.* 1998) and biogeographic provinces (Hernández-Camacho *et al.* 1992), and bird distributions in Colombia can vary considerably between slopes (see Remsen & Graves 1995), making new records for each slope especially significant. We present other records that represent less dramatic but important range extensions in a separate section at the end of the article. Complete lists of all the species recorded during surveys are available upon request from the authors. All specimens were deposited in the collection of the ICN.

Study Sites

A. Pueblo Rico. Town and municipality seat, located on the W slope of the W Andes *c.* 5 km NW of the crest (5°13'N, 76°02'W), at an elevation of 1,570 m. Field work was conducted in the surrounding areas (1,500-1,800 m), which contained a mosaic of pastures and cultivated areas on gentle slopes, patches of second growth scrub and woodland, and several patches of remnant, moderately disturbed forest on steep slopes. Also surveyed were the deep valleys of the Quebrada Yarumal and the Quebrada Rionegro, which included narrow strips of woodland along the streams, mostly second growth woodland and small pastures and croplands on flat areas near the streams, and high-grade to nearly intact forest on steep canyon slopes. FGS worked this area 8-19 April 1991, S. Arango between 19 and 30 September 1991.

B. Mistrató. Town and municipality seat on the E slope of the W Andes (5°18'N, 75°53'W, 1,525 m). Fieldwork was conducted mainly in shade coffee plantations and patches of second-growth woodland nearby (1,500-1,600 m), and in a patch of remnant, disturbed forest (Vereda Río Arriba, *c.* 1,700 m) by FGS between 28-30 March and 5-8 April 1992.

C. El Empalado. A large patch of forest (>100 ha) on the crest of the W Andes *c.* 8 km N of Mistrató (5°22'N, 75°53'W, 1,600-1,850 m), mostly above the main road from Mistrató to San Antonio del Chamí. Near the road the forest has been selectively cut and some areas are dominated by second growth woodland. Above *c.* 1,800 m the slopes are much steeper and the forest is nearly intact, continuing beyond the elevations studied to the adjacent mountaintops at over 2,000 m. FGS worked this area on 31 March and 1-4 April 1992. This forest was much wetter than that at Río Arriba, with mist and clouds during most of the mornings; larger trees supported a heavy growth of moss and epiphytes.

D. Santa Cecilia. A small town in the western foothills of the W Andes overlooking the upper Río San Juan, c. 20 km NW of Pueblo Rico (5°21'N, 76°09'W). Fieldwork was conducted in the stony, brushy pastures near the river at c. 300 m, areas of selectively logged, very wet forest on slopes facing the town between 400 and 700 m, and in relatively intact forest on the steep slopes of the Alto Amurrapá, a large hill (to c. 1,050 m) c. 2.5 km S of the town. I. E. Lozano observed here 8-19 April 1991, FGS 19 - 30 September 1991.

E. Alto de Pisones. A cloud-forested ridge on the W slope of the W Andes on the S side of the Caramanta massif that forms the border between Risaralda and Antioquia (5°25'N, 76°02'W). Fieldwork was conducted mainly along the horse trail between the hamlet of Geguadas and the mining settlement of Puerto Oro and along the Cuchilla Gebanía ridge, between 1,400 and 1,850 m. The area is mostly covered with pristine to lightly disturbed cloud forest above 1,500 m; below this a mosaic of forest and second growth of various ages exists due to shifting cultivation by the Embera Indians. The area and its vegetation are described in more detail by Salaman & Stiles (1996). FGS worked here 28 May-8 June 1992 and 12-17 April 1993; S. Arango and I. E. Lozano observed and netted here on 2-4 October 1994.

F. La Linda. Located on the E (Cauca Valley) slope of the W Andes, c. 8 km NE of the municipality of Jardín, on the SW of the department of Antioquia (5°38'N, 75°48'W, 2,400-2,700 m), this reserve encompasses 530 ha protecting the Quebrada La Linda watershed. The area is a mosaic of recently abandoned pastures, young and old second growth, and an important extension of continuous primary forest. Most forested areas have been strongly disturbed by logging and palm shoot harvesting in the past. Forests are characterised by a heavy epiphytic load and dominance of palms, with *Wettinia kalbreyeri* and *Prestoea acuminata* being notably abundant. Other numerically important trees include *Billia* (Hippocastanaceae), *Croton* and *Alchornea* (both Euphorbiaceae), *Schefflera* (Araliaceae), and several species of Melastomataceae, Rubiaceae, and Lauraceae. AMC, CDC, GAL, JLT, A. Cortés, and A. M. Castaño conducted bird surveys on 3-7 January 2001 and 13-14 April 2002.

G. Las Nubes. A reserve located in SW Antioquia c. 4 km NE of the town of Jericó on the E (Cauca Valley) slope of the W Andes (5°48'N, 75°48'W, 1,600-2,250 m). Rocky outcrops in the lower part of the reserve have largely deterred forest clearance for cattle raising and coffee cultivation, and the c. 180 ha forest remnant has received little human intervention. Forests are characterised by large canopy trees reaching over 20 m in height and 1m diameter, especially in areas of gentle slopes. Plant species are typical of the northern Andes, with dominance of the Rubiaceae, Melastomataceae, Lauraceae, and Clusiaceae. *Geonoma* (Palmae), *Palicourea* (Rubiaceae), *Persea* (Lauraceae), *Ficus* (Moraceae), and *Cyathea* (Cyatheaceae) are some of the most abundant plants. Ornithological work by AMC took place between 2,200-2,400 m on 16-19 September 2000.

H. La Noque. A large block of forest (> 700 ha) located on the E slope of the W Andes, W Antioquia, c. 11 km from the municipality of Caicedo (6°23'N, 76°01'W, 2,400-2,800 m). Forests are covered by mist during most of the year due to condensation of the warm air currents that rise from the Cauca Valley, promoting high relative humidity and profuse growth of epiphytes such as mosses, bromeliads, ferns, aroids, and orchids. The forests were subject to strong intervention in the past, mainly for firewood and timber extraction. Lauraceae, Melastomataceae, Rubiaceae, and Ericaceae are the dominant plant families. Some of the most abundant plant genera are *Quercus* (Fagaceae), *Croton* and *Alchornea* (Euphorbiaceae), *Clusia* (Clusiaceae), *Weinmannia* (Cunnoniaceae), *Freziera* (Theaceae), *Roupala* (Proteaceae), , and *Persea* (Lauraceae). Bird surveys took place between 2,400-2,600m on 17-20 November 2000 by AMC.

The location of these and other localities mentioned in the text are illustrated in Figure 1.

Species Accounts

SCALY-NAPED PARROT *Amazona mercenaria*

Flocks were observed flying over forest canopy and along ravines at La Noque on 18 and 20 November 2000. Also, a number of square-tailed parrots observed on 6 January 2001 by JLT and Alex Cortés at La Linda were likely this species. Previously unrecorded in the W Andes N of Valle, these records represent a c. 280 km northerly range extension in this cordillera.

WHITE-CAPPED PARROT *Pionus seniloides*

A group of 7 individuals was observed on 13-14 April 2002 at 2,450 m at La Linda (AMC). In addition, a pair was photographed while perching beside a hole on a dead trunk, presumably a nest cavity. These are the first records of this nomadic parrot for the entire W Andes.

COMMON POTOO *Nyctibius griseus*

Single individuals were heard singing at La Linda at 2,400 m elevation on the nights of 3 and 5 January 2001. Although this common species is widely distributed in Colombia at low and mid-montane elevations, there are few records above 1,900 m (but see Alvarez-Rebolledo 2000).

LYRE-TAILED NIGHTJAR *Uropsalis lyra*

A male was observed by flashlight before dawn on 2 April 1992 sallying for passing insects from a snag c. 8 m high at the edge of tall forest by a roadside at El Empalado. No previous records in the W Andes N of Valle (Pance on the E slope, located c. 220 km S of El Empalado).

CHESTNUT-COLLARED SWIFT *Streptoprocne rutila*

Flocks were commonly encountered together with White-collared Swifts *S. zonaris* at Las Nubes on 17 and 18 September 2000, at La Noque on 18 and 19 November 2000, and at La Linda on 13 April 2002 (AMC); also seen on several occasions over Pueblo Rico, El Empalado and Alto de Pisones (FGS). Although this species is common at mid-montane elevations throughout its range in Colombia, these are the first records for the northern portion of the W Andes.

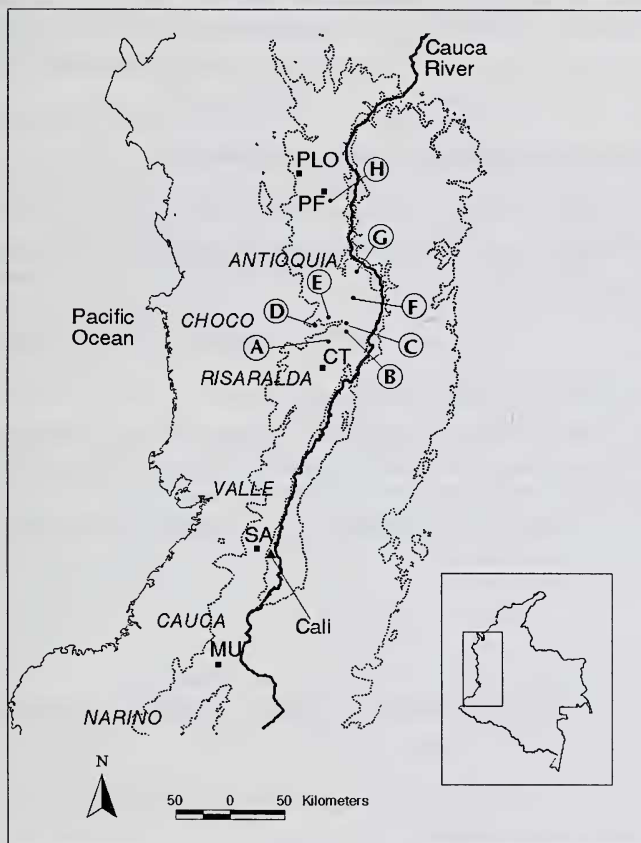


Figure 1. Map of Western Colombia showing the location of study sites (encircled letters) and other mentioned localities. The dotted line indicates the 1,000-m contour line, which outlines the W and C Andes, separated by the Cauca River. Capitalized italic titles show the location of departments in the W Andes (boundaries not shown). Study sites: A. Pueblo Rico, B. Mistrató, C. El Empalado, D. Santa Cecilia, E. Alto de Pisones, F. La Linda, G. Las Nubes, H. La Noque. Other localities mentioned in the text: MU = Munchique, SA = San Antonio, CT = Cerro Tatamá, PF = Páramo de Frontino, PLO = PNN Las Orquídeas.

CHAPMAN'S SWIFT *Chaetura chapmani*

Two were captured, one collected, out of a mixed flock of swifts circling low over Alto Amurrapá on 29 September 1991; several seen on at least four occasions flying low over forested valleys at Alto de Pisones in both June 1992 and April 1993. The specimen from Alto Amurrapá, representative of the nominate race (cf. Marín 1997), had small gonads (left testis 4 mm) and was moulting. Few records exist for this swift in Colombia; in the W Andes it was previously known only from the extreme N end and from above Cali, Valle. However, these records evidently pertain to the race *viridipennis*, an austral migrant that may best be considered a separate species (Marín 1997). It seems probable that *C. chapmani* breeds in the region, which is noteworthy given that Marín (1997) noted that there was uncertainty regarding the existence of a resident population in NW South America.

GREEN-FRONTED LANCEBILL *Doryfera ludoviciae*

One individual was observed at Río Arriba above Mistrató on 6 April 1992, foraging at an epiphytic ericad (cf. *Psammisia*); another was seen at La Linda foraging on flowers of *Satyria breviflora* (Ericaceae) on 5 January 2001, and an adult was captured the next day in a forest edge at 2,550 m. Previously known from the eastern slope of the W Andes only N to Cali (c. 250 km S of La Linda), though present the length of the Pacific slope from Parque Nacional Natural (PNN) Las Orquídeas southward.

GREEN VIOLETEAR *Colibri thalassinus*

Observed once at Río Arriba above Mistrató (FGS), once at La Noque (AMC) and recorded in numbers daily at La Linda, where birds were found singing incessantly from exposed perches during most of the day. On 6 January 2001 one individual was captured and photographed in a mist net set in a forest edge. Previously recorded in the W Andes N only to Valle; may be restricted to the E slope, since it was not seen at similar elevations in wetter forests on the divide (El Empalado) or the W slope (Pisones).

FAWN-BREASTED BRILLIANT *Heliodoxa rubinoides*

An adult male with heavily worn plumage was captured and photographed within old secondary forest at La Noque on 18 October 2000 (AMC). This uncommon hummingbird had been recorded in the eastern slope of the W Andes only in Valle (c. 300 km S of La Noque) and in the western slope in Antioquia.

BUFF-TAILED CORONET *Boissonneaua flavescens*

We observed one individual in logged primary forest at La Linda on 5 January 2001. Although the species is known from the Pacific slope of the northern W Andes, there are no previous records from the E slope N of Valle; this represents a northerly extension of c. 250 km along the E slope.

TOURMALINE SUNANGEL *Heliangelus exortis*

Observed and captured in old secondary forest at La Noque on 19 November 2000. This hummingbird is known only from scattered localities in the W Andes including the Pacific slope in Antioquia, but had not been recorded in the E slope N of Valle (c. 300 km S of the study site).

MOUNTAIN VELVETBREAST *Lafresnaya lafresnayi*

An adult male was collected in a forest edge on 6 January 2001 at La Linda and a female was observed on 14 April 2002 at the same site. The species was known in the W Andes only from Nariño and Cauca (c. 370 km S of La Linda) and one locality in the Pacific slope of Antioquia.

WEDGE-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD *Schistes geoffroyi*

One bird was observed piercing the bases of *Heliconia* and *Columnnea* flowers to rob nectar near the Quebrada Yarumal near Pueblo Rico and a male and female were collected in a wooded ravine above the town on 12 April 1991. These represent the northernmost records of the race *albogularis*, previously recorded N only to Valle and sometimes considered a species distinct from nominate *geoffroyi*.

LONG-TAILED SYLPH *Agelaiocercus kingi*

Several individuals were observed by AMC at La Noque on 17 and 18 November 2000. At La Linda, we observed both males and females daily along forest borders, often visiting flowers of *Palicourea* (Rubiaceae). Two males were captured (one collected) along a forest edge on 6 January 2001. Previously known in the W Andes only from Nariño to Valle and from a single locality in Antioquia, N of our study sites. It is noteworthy that this species was not recorded on the W slope or crest of the W Andes in Risaralda; in all such sites the related *A. coelestis* was abundant.

PURPLE-THROATED WOODSTAR *Philodice mitchelli*

An immature male was collected on a scrubby slope above Santa Cecilia on 23 September 1991. An adult male was observed on several occasions perched at the tip of a roadside tree overlooking a coffee plantation near Mistrató (FGS). These represent the northernmost records of this species and the first N of Valle.

TOUCAN BARBET *Semnornis ramphastinus*

Common to abundant at Alto de Pisones, where several groups of 4-8 birds could be seen or heard daily in forest above c. 1500 m (FGS). This near-threatened species (BirdLife International 2000) had not been previously reported N of Valle, so it is encouraging to find a healthy population well beyond the previously known range limits.

GRAYISH PICULET *Picumnus granadensis*

Fairly common at Santa Cecilia (three captured, male collected), Mistrató and San Antonio de Chamí (FGS). Previously known from Pacific slope only in dry, rain-shadow valleys like that of the Río Dagua-Calima; appears to be invading this slope following deforestation along roads crossing low passes from the Cauca Valley.

CRIMSON-MANTLED WOODPECKER *Piculus rivolii*

Recorded at La Noque on 17 and 18 November 2000 (AMC) and heard and observed daily at La Linda (photographs). It was found frequently with mixed-species flocks, generally in pairs; on 13 April 2002 a nest under construction was found at La Linda. The species was unknown from the W Andes between Valle and PNN Las Orquídeas.

TYRANNINE WOODCREEPER *Dendrocicla tyrannina*

Observed and tape-recorded at Las Nubes on 17 November 2000 (AMC). Also, one individual was observed briefly at very close range while foraging in the forest midstory at La Linda on 4 January 2001. This patchily distributed species had been recorded previously on the Pacific slope of Antioquia (Páramo de Frontino, PNN Las Orquídeas) and Risaralda (Cerro Tatamá) but there were no records in the eastern slope of the W Andes N of Cauca (Munchique, which is more than 350 km S of Las Nubes).

BROWN-BILLED SCYTHERBILL *Campylorhamphus pusillus*

One individual was observed as it foraged in the lower part of a moss-covered trunk in closed-canopy forest at c. 2,500 m elevation at La Linda on 6 January 2001. The species was previously known to occur in the W Andes mostly along the Pacific slope from NW Antioquia southwards. This record confirms its occurrence on the Cauca Valley slope and represents an altitudinal extension of c. 300 m upwards.

PEARLED TREERUNNER *Margarornis squamiger*

Pairs or small groups were commonly encountered accompanying mixed-species flocks at La Linda. The species had not been recorded on the E slope of the W Andes, where it was known only from localities in NW Antioquia and Cauca.

RUSTY-WINGED BARBTAIL *Premnornis guttuligera*

Four were captured (an immature male collected) at Las Nubes on 18 September 2000 (AMC). This is the first record of the species for the E slope of the W Andes. On the Pacific slope, it has been recorded in NW Antioquia, Risaralda (found by FGS at Alto de Pisones), Valle and Nariño.

FLAMMULATED TREEHUNTER *Thripadectes flammulatus*

Single birds (possibly the same individual) were observed foraging in dense forest understory at La Linda on 4 and 6 January 2001. Previously known in the W Andes only from the Pacific slope in Antioquia and from Valle and Cauca (more than 200 km S of La Linda).

STRIPED TREEHUNTER *Thripadectes holostictus*

One individual, observed from close range in dense understory at Las Nubes on 17 September 2000 (AMC), represents a substantial range extension for this patchily distributed species, previously known in the W Andes N only to Valle.

PACIFIC TUFTEDCHEEK *Pseudocolaptes johnsonii*

Uncommon at Alto de Pisones, where usually seen accompanying mixed-species flocks in the lower canopy, rummaging in bromeliads and tufts of moss. One adult male collected 2 June 1992. Not previously recorded N of Valle.

UNIFORM ANTSHRIKE *Thamnophilus unicolor*

Infrequently heard (tape-recorded) at Las Nubes on 18 September 2000 and observed in tall secondary forest at La Noque on 18 November 2000 (AMC); common at Alto de Pisones, also seen at El Empalado (FGS). Formerly known in the W Andes only from the Pacific slope in NW Antioquia and from Valle, Cauca and Nariño.

CHESTNUT-NAPED ANTPITTA *Grallaria nuchalis*

One individual heard singing close to a forest edge at 2,450 m at La Linda on 14 April 2002 (AMC) represents the first record of this species for the W Andes. Further fieldwork in the area is necessary to determine whether this new population corresponds to *G. nuchalis obsoleta* (a vocally distinct form that may represent a different species previously recorded only in NW Ecuador; Ridgely & Greenfield 2001) or *G. nuchalis ruficeps*, which occurs in the C and E Andes of Colombia.

SLATE-CROWNED ANTPITTA *Grallaricula nana*

A single individual was heard and tape-recorded at La Linda on 14 April 2002 (AMC). The species was previously known from both slopes of the W Andes N only to Valle, this records extends its known range c. 160 km to the northern sector of the Cordillera.

BLACK-CAPPED TYRANULET *Phyllomyias nigrocapillus*

A solitary individual was observed in a forest edge at La Noque on 19 November 2000 (AMC). In addition, one individual was briefly observed in a mixed-species flock at La Linda on 5 January 2001. Previous records in the W Andes are from the W slope in Antioquia and from Valle and Cauca.

ASHY-HEADED TYRANULET *Phyllomyias cinereiceps*

An individual was observed accompanying a mixed-species flock along the edge of disturbed forest at Río Arriba, above Mistrató, on 6 April 1992 by FGS. Previously known in the W Andes only N to Valle, this represents a c. 170 km northerly range extension in the W Andes.

WHITE-TAILED TYRANULET *Mecocerculus poecilocercus*

On 5 January 2001, two individuals were heard calling and then observed sallying for insects while accompanying a mixed flock that moved along a forest edge adjacent

to pastures with scattered trees at La Linda. This is the first record of this species in the W Andes N of Cauca.

RUFOUS-BROWED TYRANULET *Phylloscartes superciliaris*

Single individuals or pairs observed accompanying mixed flocks on several occasions in subcanopy of cloud forest at Alto de Pisones (FGS); a pair joined a throng of small birds mobbing a pygmy owl on 3 June 1992; an adult male was collected on 14 April 1993. These are the first records for the W Andes of this species, which is very little-known in Colombia. Previously recorded only on Cerro Tacarcuna on the Panamá boundary, the Central Andes in Antioquia (Salaman *et al.* 2002), and the Eastern Andes in Santander.

RUFOUS-HEADED PYGMY-TYRANT *Pseudotriccus ruficeps*

Few individuals were heard daily in the forest understory at La Linda. On 6 January 2001, one bird was observed at close range, and an adult male was captured and collected in an area covered by dense *Chusquea* bamboo. Previously recorded in the W Andes only from Valle southward, this extends the known range of the species by c. 180 km to the northern sector of the cordillera.

FLAVESCENT FLYCATCHER *Myiophobus flavicans*

Observed regularly, usually singles or pairs with mixed-species flocks, above 1,600 m in forest at Alto de Pisones (FGS). Single birds were observed with mixed-species flocks in the subcanopy of old secondary forest interior on 17 and 19 September 2000 at Las Nubes (AMC). Also, a pair was observed closely on 6 January 2001 while foraging in the forest subcanopy at La Linda. This species is fairly common throughout the Colombian Andes, but had not been recorded previously N of Valle in the W Andes except for a sighting in PNN Las Orquídeas.

HANDSOME FLYCATCHER *Myiophobus pulcher*

Pairs or small family groups were observed on four occasions accompanying mixed-species flocks in midlevels and subcanopy of cloud forest and along the Alto Gebanía ridge at Alto de Pisones in early June, 1992 (FGS). These observations fill a large gap in the distribution of this species in the W Andes, between Valle and NW Antioquia (PNN Las Orquídeas).

YELLOW-BELLIED CHAT-TYRANT *Silvicoltrix diadema*

Few individuals were recorded daily at La Linda both in forest edges and in the understory of closed forest. Two individuals were captured (one adult female collected) on 4 January 2001. Except for a sighting in PNN Las Orquídeas, there are no previous records of this species in the W Andes N of Valle (c. 180 km S of La Linda).

RUFIOUS-TAILED TYRANT *Knipolegus poecilurus*

Solitary birds were observed and tape-recorded on 17 and 18 September 2000 on forest edges and isolated shrubs within pastures at Las Nubes (AMC). This species has a patchy distribution in the highlands of Colombia, and was unknown in the W Andes N of Valle.

PALE-EDGED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus cephalotes*

Common at La Linda, La Noque and Las Nubes, where we heard, tape-recorded, and observed several individuals daily. At La Linda, one bird was captured, photographed and released in a forest edge on 6 January 2001. Also found to be common on mountain slopes above Pueblo Rico, in taller second growth and forest edges (FGS). In the W Andes, it had been recorded only in NW Antioquia and Valle.

BARRED BECARD *Pachyramphus versicolor*

Uncommon in Risaralda, where single birds or pairs were seen with mixed flocks on several occasions at Pueblo Rico, Mistrató and Alto de Pisones, usually at forest edges (FGS). Also found at La Linda, where one male and a pair were observed with mixed flocks on 5 January 2001 and 13 April 2002, respectively. Previous records in the W Andes are from PNN Las Orquídeas and from Valle southwards.

BLACK AND WHITE BECARD *Pachyramphus albobriseus*

At Alto de Pisones, FGS observed a female accompanying a mixed flock in the subcanopy of mature cloud forest on 1 June 1992; on 3 June he observed a vocalizing pair under similar circumstances on the Cuchilla Gebanía ridge. This species is very poorly known in Colombia, having been recorded in the W Andes only in Nariño.

YELLOW-HEADED MANAKIN *Chloropipo flavicapilla*

Two males (one immature, one adult) were captured and collected at Las Nubes by AMC on 17 and 19 September 2001, respectively. Both were trapped in mist-nets placed in old secondary forest near a ravine. This poorly known restricted-range manakin has a patchy distribution in the C and W Andes of Colombia and Ecuador. The species was previously recorded locally in both slopes of W Andes in Valle and Cauca (Munchique).

CLUB-WINGED MANAKIN *Machaeropterus deliciosus*

Fairly common at Alto de Pisones, where several were mist-netted and an adult male was collected on 1 July 1992 (FGS). A lek of at least 8 males was active in June 1992 and April 1993 at c. 1,550 m on the S side of the ridge in disturbed forest adjacent to the horse trail. Not previously recorded N of Valle.

SPILLMANN'S TAPACULO *Scytalopus spillmanni*

Tape-recorded at La Linda on 14 April 2002 (AMC, identification confirmed by N. Krabbe). Previously known in Colombia only from the Central Andes and the Pacific

and Amazonian slopes in Nariño (Krabbe & Schulenberg 1997, N. Krabbe, pers. comm.), this record represents a major northerly range extension of more than 600 km to the northern sector of the W Andes.

***Scytalopus* sp.**

A *Scytalopus* tapaculo was tape-recorded and collected by FGS at Alto de Pisones on 6 June 1992; its song consisted of an extremely long-drawn-out series of trills that most closely approached that of *spillmanni* as described by Krabbe & Schulenberg (1997). However, upon hearing the recording and examining the specimen, N. Krabbe suggested that the bird might represent an undescribed species. More recordings and specimens are necessary to assess the taxonomic status of this tapaculo, which was fairly common on slopes (where usually in dense tangles of old treefalls) and in dense, bamboo-choked ravines between 1,450 and 1,700 m at Pisones. Along ridgetops and at higher elevations it was replaced by the Nariño Tapaculo *S. vicini* (also tape-recorded and collected; identification confirmed by N. Krabbe), which was also found at El Empalado.

OCELLATED TAPACULO *Acropternis orthonyx*

One individual was tape-recorded and then observed closely after playback in a thicket of *Chusquea* bamboo at La Linda on 14 April 2002 (AMC). This is the first record of this little known species for the W Andes.

SEPIA-BROWN WREN *Cinnycerthia olivascens*

A group of c. 6 individuals was seen on 6 January 2001 and another was heard on 14 April 2002 at La Linda while moving noisily in thick bamboo-laden forest understory. Although previously recorded in the Pacific slope of the W Andes in scattered localities between NW Antioquia (PNN Las Orquídeas) and N Valle, this is the first confirmed record for the E slope. Based on two specimens collected at La Ilusión, Río Urrao (Antioquia), Brumfield & Remsen (1996) suggested that the species also occurred on the E slope of the cordillera. However, judging by the date of collection and the elevation on the specimen's labels, the correct locality for these is undoubtedly Hacienda La Ilusión (which lies on the Pacific slope), as opposed to La Ilusión, a lowland site on the west bank of the lower Cauca River (see Paynter 1997).

CHESTNUT-BREASTED WREN *Cyphorhinus thoracicus*

Uncommon at Alto de Pisones, where pairs and family groups were occasionally seen in dense, tall understory vegetation inside closed forest. FGS tape-recorded a male singing on 17 April 1993; heard much less frequently in June 1992. Previously unrecorded in the W Andes between Valle and PNN Las Orquídeas.

PALE-EYED THRUSH *Platycichla leucops*

Observed twice at Alto de Pisones in the subcanopy during early June 1992 (FGS); an adult male was collected on 4 June on the Cuchilla Gebanía. This species had not been previously recorded N of Valle in the W Andes.

PLUMBEOUS SEEDEATER *Sporophila plumbea*

A pair was observed twice with a mixed flock (*S. minuta*, *S. corvina*, *S. nigricollis*, and *Volatinia jacarina*) feeding on seeding grasses in a brushy pasture along the Río San Juan below Santa Cecilia on 24 September 1991 (FGS). The pale slate grey colour of the male, with white belly, eyespot and speculum and dusky bill, eliminated the heavier- and yellow-billed *S. intermedia*. This species had been recorded twice on the Caribbean slope in N Colombia but otherwise was previously unknown W of the Eastern Andes; this is the first record for the Pacific slope. The records of the Ruddy-breasted Seedeater *S. minuta* are also among the first on this slope in Colombia, and highlight yet again the capacity of many open-country birds to move rapidly over considerable distances into new areas when forest barriers are removed (cf. Stiles *et al.* 1999).

WHITE-CAPPED TANAGER *Sericossypha albocristata*

A group was tape-recorded while calling from the canopy of forest edge at La Noque on the mornings of 18 and 19 November 2000 (AMC). Also recorded at La Linda, where one bird was observed in a semi-open area on 18 December 2000 (JLT), and a group was seen and tape-recorded on 13 April 2002 (AMC). These are the first records in the W Andes of this local and erratic species with poorly known distribution.

GREY-HOODED BUSH-TANAGER *Cnemoscopus rubrirostris*

Recorded daily La Linda, where it was one of the most common birds in mixed-species flocks. Pairs or small groups occupied the middle levels of the forest, often sallying to catch insects. This record represents another locality of its patchy distribution along the W Andes, where it was known from NW Antioquia (PNN Las Orquídeas) and Cauca.

BLACK-CAPPED HEMISPINGUS *Hemispingus atropileus*

Commonly encountered with mixed species flocks at La Linda, where three individuals were captured on 6 January 2001. We collected an adult female and a male in breeding condition. This locality represents a range extension from the known populations in the Pacific slope of the W Andes in NW Antioquia and Cauca, and the first record for the E slope of the Cordillera.

OLEAGINOUS HEMISPINGUS *Hemispingus frontalis*

One individual with a mixed flock and a small group moving along a forest border were observed at La Linda on 5 January 2001 and 14 April 2002, respectively; recorded previously only in two disjunct regions of the W Andes: NW Antioquia and Cauca.

BLACK-EARED HEMISPINGUS *Hemispingus melanotis*

One individual was observed in detail at La Linda while joining an understory flock together with other tanagers and warblers along a forest edge covered by *Chusquea*

bamboo on 14 April 2002 (AMC). This observation represents the first record of the species for the W Andes.

RED-HOODED TANAGER *Piranga rubriceps*

A pair and a group of 4-5 birds were recorded on 5 and 6 January 2001 foraging in the upper forest canopy at La Linda. Contrary to the usual behaviour of the species (Isler & Isler 1999) we found it joining mixed-species flocks. Also, a group of 3 birds was observed (S. Arango) on 25 September 1991 along the edge of a disturbed forest near Pueblo Rico. The only previously known locality in the W Andes N of Valle lies on the Pacific slope of NW Antioquia.

FAWN-BREASTED TANAGER *Pipraeidea melanonota*

A singing male was observed in a tree top in second growth along Quebrada Yarumal near Pueblo Rico on 17 April 1991 (FGS). A bird was seen in the top of a tree near the forest border at Las Nubes on 17 September 2000 (AMC) and one male was observed in the upper level of the forest at La Linda following a mixed flock on 5 January 2001. This tanager had been recorded in the W Andes only on the Pacific slope in Valle and Nariño.

THICK-BILLED EUPHONIA *Euphonia laniirostris*

One male was observed along a forest edge adjacent to pastures on 4 January 2001 at La Linda. The elevation at which the bird was found (c. 2,400 m) is noteworthy, as the species usually occurs only up to 1,800 m, occasionally to 2,200 m. This record is not altogether surprising given that many non-forest lowland species are known to expand their altitudinal ranges upward into the Andes following deforestation (Renjifo 1999).

YELLOW-COLLARED CHLOROPHONIA *Chlorophonia flavirostris*

Uncommon at Alto de Pisones, where FGS observed it visiting fruiting melastome trees, usually in the company of other tanagers, along the Cuchilla Gebanía ridge on several occasions in June 1992, and collected an adult male. In April 1993, a pair was observed building a dome-shaped mossy nest with a side entrance, c. 8 m up in a crotch of a small dead tree at the edge of a forest clearing at 1,550 m. Previously recorded in the W Andes only in Nariño and Valle.

CHESTNUT-BREASTED CHLOROPHONIA *Chlorophonia pyrrhophrys*

We found one male foraging with a mixed-species flock on 5 January 2001 at La Linda. During June 1992, FGS saw this species on several occasions visiting the same melastome trees as the previous species at Alto de Pisones, but the two seemed never to be present simultaneously. Previously known on both slopes of the W Andes from Valle southward, and on the W slope in Antioquia.

Additional Records

The following are some minor range extensions. **Tawny-bellied Hermit** *Phaethornis symrhatophorus*: several individuals recorded in forest edges and within tall forest at Alto de Pisones and La Linda represent a range extension of c. 75 km N in the W Andes, from the Cerro Tatamá massif. **Rufous Spinetail** *Synallaxis unirufa*: observed twice in dense thickets of *Chusquea* bamboo at La Linda; previously recorded in the W Andes only from Cerro Tatamá southwards and from PNN Las Orquídeas, these observations fill a c. 200 km gap in the species' known range. **Variegated Bristle-tyrant** *Phylloscartes poecilotis*: one individual observed closely and tape-recorded in a mixed-species flock at Las Nubes is the northernmost record for this species in the W Andes, where it was known N only to Risaralda (found at Alto de Pisones). **Black-billed Peppershrike** *Cyclarhis nigristrostris*: several individuals heard and tape-recorded at the three study sites in Antioquia fill a gap in the known distribution of this species in the northern part of the W Andes between Risaralda, where common at El Empalado and Alto de Pisones, and NW Antioquia. **Black-and-white Seedeater** *Sporophila luctuosa*: scattered individuals observed in overgrown pastures, shrubs, and maize crops at La Noque; previously known to occur in the Pacific slope of the W Andes in Antioquia and patchily in the E slope. **Black-winged Saltator** *Saltator atripennis*: observed once at La Noque; previously known to occur on both slopes of the southern W Andes reaching N to the upper Río San Juan (Cerro Caramanta), this is the northernmost record for the species in the W Andes. **Purplish-mantled Tanager** *Iridosornis porphyrocephala*: found commonly at La Linda, which represents the northernmost locality on the E slope for this restricted-range species; occurs mostly in the Pacific slope of the W Andes but it is known to be present also in some areas of the E slope near low passes as at Mampay and Río Arriba, above Mistrató. **Mountain Cacique** *Cacicus leucoramphus*: observed and heard at La Noque and recorded daily in small numbers at La Linda, where two active nests were found on April 2002; these are the first records for the E slope of the W Andes in Antioquia, where it was known N of our study sites in the Pacific slope.

Concluding remarks

The understanding of the distribution and conservation status of the avifauna of the northern sector of the Western Andes remains far from complete despite the 67 records presented here. Undoubtedly, this large number of range extensions reflects the paucity of fieldwork in this region and it is likely that additional surveys will provide many more noteworthy records for the area. As expected based on the lack of study of the northern sector of the cordillera, most of the records we presented are northerly extensions of the range of species that were known from the Central W Andes (N only to Cauca or Valle, where past ornithological studies had focused). However, our surveys also provided the first records for the W Andes for 6 species, and extended the known range of several others to the Pacific or Cauca Valley slope.

The forests of the northern W Andes are important for the conservation of several endemic and/or threatened species such as the Yellow-eared Parrot *Ognorhynchus icterotis*, which was recently recorded in this region (Toro & Flórez 2001). The discovery of a new population of this critically endangered species has spurred efforts to protect it and preserve its habitat, and CORANTIOQUIA has purchased land in forested areas for conservation purposes. Establishment of new reserves in the W Andes of Antioquia will also ensure the protection of populations of the endangered Red-bellied Grackle *Hypopyrrhus pyrohypogaster*, which was found during our surveys at La Linda, Las Nubes and La Noque. The currently unprotected Alto de Pisones represents an important area because of healthy populations of species of conservation concern like Toucan Barbet and Gold-ringed Tanager *Bangsia aureocincta* (Stiles 1998) and poorly known endemics like the Chocó Vireo *Vireo masteri* (Salaman & Stiles 1996). Other little-known birds of this region await careful study to determine the size and health of their populations (e.g., Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer *Diglossa gloriosissima*) or their taxonomic status (e.g., Dusky Starfrontlet *Coeligena orina*).

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New birds for Guyana from Mts Roraima and Ayanganna

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Mount Roraima, the legendary mountain at the juncture of Guyana, Venezuela and Brazil, has figured prominently in the history of ornithology in South America. Revered by indigenous people as the "mother of waters", this mountain was the destination of numerous exploratory expeditions, especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Most of the early expeditions to Mt Roraima were undertaken to explore the boundaries and/or biodiversity of Guyana, during the time that it was a British colony. Extensive collections were returned to European, Venezuelan and American museums by intrepid field scientists such as the Schomburgks, Whitely, McConnell, Quelch, Tate, Carter, the Phelps and others (Mayr & Phelps 1967). This material formed the basis for the description of numerous taxa of the endemic highland avifauna of the Pantepui region.

Ironically, many of these highland birds are not actually known to occur within the boundaries of Guyana (Phelps 1938, Snyder 1966, Braun *et al.* 2000), even though they have appeared in several previous accounts of its avifauna (e.g., Cabanis 1848, Chubb 1916, 1921). Because it is much easier to approach Mt Roraima through the savannas on the southwestern slopes than the extensive, continuous forest on the northeastern slopes, all biological expeditions prior to 1971 actually surveyed portions of the mountain that lie in Venezuelan territory. Phelps (1938) highlighted this fact and Snyder (1966) listed 33 bird species that had been collected on or near Mt Roraima, but were not known from Guyana. This gap in knowledge is significant, because several of these birds are restricted to the eastern tepuis and a large proportion of their global ranges may lie within Guyana.